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884 form. When the moon is about quarter full in the west the messengers return. Everyone becomes very quiet; that peculiar type of quietness reigns in which one almost feels there is trouble brewing within a Murngin camp.—Then the people who have had trouble during the last year, or even prior to that time, begin to quarrel and fight. They are always of different clans, never members of the same group. When fights start, the leaders stop them. The people who have been keeping [198] the Ulmark stand by, spears in hand, and talk the ki-djin "language" to them; some sing it. The "language" is a kind of native pidgin which includes words from the Mullikan, Djuan, and other native languages from the south.

884 A man noted for his clownish abilities takes his spear and spear-
522 thrower from his personal basket, eats his food in an absurd manner, and generally acts the fool while he talks the kidjin language. Everyone laughs at this performance. If one of the quarreling men turns on the clown, the latter points a spear at him and pretends to spear him. The general loud laughter from everyone keeps the angry one from committing any overt act; and since the clown and his audience express no hostility, the offended man cannot cause trouble. It is clear that this clowning is a method of preventing feuds from breaking out during the ceremony.

884 The Torres Straits pigeon is danced again and the pigeon pulled
535 through the drum as before. The spear is danced again, and the entire remaining sequence of Ulmark dances repeated; the snail shells are [302] placed on the spear-throwers as before, and all the men paint their bodies and upper arms and legs with red ocher and kangaroo grease.

884 2. The initiates lie down in two lines. The four messengers sing near
533 the general camp, but low enough so that the women cannot hear them. They sing in the kidjin language. Then they sing louder, and the women answer with the refrain: "Kait-ba! kait-ba!"

3. On the men's ground two lines of dancers throw the snail rattles back and forth. They, too, sing the refrain of the women. After this all go to the general camp singing the kait-ba song. They take the marl-pin-pin with them. When they get on the ground near the general camp they change the refrain to a kind of low humming noise, "m-u-mmmmmmmmm."

884 4. The women meanwhile have come out to the intermediate ground and stand in a line, and the men approach and form themselves into a line opposite them. The men from one clan throw a snail-shell rattle to the women belonging to the same clan. They throw the

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marl-pin-pin back again. When it has gone back and forth and everyone has thrown the marlpinpin, the women finally keep it. The men now dance while singing "Kait-ba! kait-ba!" and return to the men's ground, the women following until they reach the edge of the taboo ground. The men go inside and the women return to their camp.

Native Interpretation.—"The kidjin language means talk used by the two old women when they looked up into the sky and tried to stop the rain and Muit." (It is also used in fighting and hunting; a man looks at his spear and tells it to go straight. See also story of Emu and Jabiru, Appendix VIII, page 543.)

"Those two women are singing to stop Muit all night and to stop the raining. The young men lie down the way the children of the two women did." When the boys lie down in two lines, "They are the two women. This is how they did it before."

"When the men come toward the general camp they dance the two Wawilak women at first." That is why the line of men sing Kait-ba! kait-ba!, for this is the cry of the two women. When they change and make the humming sound, "This is Muit coming for the two women. That is why the camp women are singing 'Kait-ba! kait-ba!' now."

The men and women throw the marlpinpin at each other "because the two women did. They did it because they knew lots of rain was coming. Snail is just the same as snake. He comes out just before the rainy season. That snail ran when the women had that blood."

L. The Fire Dance with Spears and Yams

1. A bark cylinder is made with spears at one end and yams at the other. The cylinder is fired and the men dance in the flames.

1. The men sing all night long. The old sequence of Ulmark songs and dances is followed through in one night. Songs are also sung by the chorus in which all the things the women saw and named on their march to the sea are enumerated.

Two men leave the group and paint a bush yam with red ocher. The same men roll up pieces of paper bark into a long cylinder about one foot in diameter and about twenty feet long. Several spears are tied together and also wrapped in paper bark. It is near daylight by this time. A fire is built and the bark cylinder is placed with one end near it. At the opposite end of the bark cylinder the wrapped spears are placed. Two men sit at the fire end of the paper bark where the yam has been placed. A line of men sits down on the spears and on the paper-bark cylinder. The paper bark is lit and the men get up and

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177 part of their agricultural complex. It is probable that tides, currents, birds, and other natural causes introduced several floral species into the north that are part of the raw material used in the technological and economic life of the Murngin. Since the tamarind fruit is known to be edible, these plants, brought in by natural means, occupy the same position in Murngin life as the tamarind.

With the exception of the canoe, sail, mast, tobacco pipe, Malay beard, and tamarind tree, little else was contributed by these traders as a permanent part of Murngin material culture. Their influence on the interior people was far less than that felt by the coastal groups. The dugout, with its sail and mast, has not, even today, penetrated twenty miles inland, except by visits of the coastal people, even though there are large navigable rivers and inland lakes that would support a dugout canoe. The Malay pipe is generally used on the coast and the interior. Very few iron tomahawks ever reached the bush people. The tamarind tree is found only on the coast and the adjacent islands, for the Malay never penetrated the interior parts of Arnhem Land.

Malay Influence on the Social Life of the Murngin.—Although the contributions of Malay civilization to Murngin material culture were not large, the purely social elements added to the aboriginal civilization were still less, and probably of less importance in modifying the other social traits. The chief elements of immaterial culture that were adopted by the eastern Arafuran natives were: (1) a pidgin Malay language that was spoken by a considerable number of natives in all the coastal tribes, but not by all the male members of the society; (2) Malay personal and place names; (3) part of the mast-raising ceremony of the Malay voyagers; (4) a mourning ceremony; and (5) other fragmentary elements, such as folk tales.

177 A pidgin Malay dialect was spoken by most of the older men among
● 198 the tribes along the Arafura coast. This language became a lingua franca among the various linguistic groups who border the coast. A man traveling from Cape Don, in the far west, could make himself understood to the people on Groote Eylandt. The language stimulated intertribal communi-
177 cation. The introduction of the dugout canoe, with its sail, also accelerated
501 and intensified the interrelations of the various local groups and dialectic
484 tribes. Anyone who has traveled a few hundred miles in a dugout, with and without sails, quickly comes to the conclusion that a canoe with a sail can average more than double the distance of a canoe depending on paddles for locomotion. The sailing canoe also made it possible for two friendly groups separated by hostile clans to communicate when the intervening peoples were on the warpath. Before this time, with the old bark canoe, it was often necessary to land on unfriendly territory because of the voyager's inability to cover the distance in one day's paddling. Al-

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
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sitting around singing. I was afraid again because I did not know what they were going to do. I did not cry. I just looked down and said nothing. They told me to stand up on the logs and squat down over the hot stones. An old man stood by. He had some lily leaves that had been soaked in water. He threw the lily leaves on the hot stones. Steam came up all around me. This went inside my anus and into my body and all through it and came out my mouth. That is what those old men told me. 159 783 852

They told me it would make me very strong and clean me all out and make me all the same as the power song. I know now they did this for this reason and so that I wouldn't be greedy and could go a long time without food and without drink.

Two or three old men warmed their hands over the fire and put them to my mouth and talked to me. They said, "You are no longer a baby. You are growing up and going to be a big man. You must not swear at anybody. You must not lie. You must not chase after other men's wives." 159 852 [867]

Another old man rubbed my navel. He said, "This will make you very strong and you won't get hungry quickly and you won't try to eat too much food." One old man sat beside me. He picked up a piece of kangaroo. He said, "This one is not kangaroo. What do you call this one?" Another old man sat on the other side of me and whispered the power name of kangaroo in my ear. I called out the secret name of this food when I swallowed it. When I said this, all the old men who were sitting around in the men's chorus sang out, "Yai! Yai!"

That first old man then named all the kinds of foods that grow in the bush and that are game and that are fish, and he said this same thing to me and that other old man told me their power names. All the time the leader beat his singing sticks and sang the sacred names of these foods. This was the first time I had ever heard the secret language which only we men understand. No women hear these things. Women are profane and they would spoil them. These are things only for men to know. Children and women are not strong enough (pages 288-290). [198] [562]

He Grows Up—A Foreign Woman Seduces Him

My father and I went to visit my nati's people at Elcho Island (map, page 40). I was larger then, and my circumcision had been a few dry seasons in the past. Some Macassar men were there, and they said that the white men were getting very mean and cheeky and that they were going to stop the Macassar men from coming. They said that this was their last voyage and they would never come again. They said that white men were all the same as animals and that they were big men and had hair on them and were very fierce and they just killed people because they liked to kill. 159 648

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159 They said that white men always stole all the women of a people they
648 visited, and when the people complained they killed them. Our old men believed them. We were all very afraid. We were sorry that the Macassar men were not coming again, for they brought us tomahawks and calico and other things we liked (pages 451-470).

One day after they had gone we saw out in the middle ocean the sail of a big boat. My older brother said he would go out and look. He was always very curious and wanted to see things for himself. He was sent out by the old men, who stayed back, for old men are like that. The old men thought he would be killed, but all the time I thought, "No, white men have fathers and mothers and wives just the same as black men." I thought a minute. I got in the canoe with my brother. We rode out to the lugger. A man threw down a rope for us to come up on. Everybody in our canoe jumped, for we thought something was going to kill us. When we saw it was a rope we were a little bit ashamed and we laughed. We crawled up the rope and went on deck.

There was a black man on board. He belonged to the tribe of Cape Don. He was called Cape Don Tommy by the white men on board. We did not know him then, but because he was a black man and he looked happy we felt better. He talked Macassar. We could talk Macassar, too. We did not
[198] talk his language, and he could not talk ours. Macassar was always the language black men talked when they could not understand each other's language. There were a white man and some Malays on board. This white man wanted some tortoise shell and pearls. We all talked in our own language and they could not understand us. My brother said that when it came night we would all sneak on board and steal all the things that this white man had. The white man, when he saw me, liked me. The Malays also liked me. They told Cape Don Tommy to ask me if I would come with them and be their cabin boy. I was a little bit afraid, but always when I was a little boy I wanted to go places and see other people. I said I would go. My brother was very afraid and wanted me to come with them, but I stayed on the ship and they went away. My brothers came after me and tried to catch me. They thought that white man was going to shoot me.
159 Our sailboat went on as far as the Crocodile Islands. When we got there I was very sorry I had gone with them, for I did not know what they were going to do with me. We put down our anchor. We got in the dinghy and were going ashore. I cried and cried. There was a Chinaman on board who was their cook. He liked me and he gave me food. We left the islands and went out to Junction Bay. I found some pelican and sea gull eggs and ate a lot of them. I asked if black fellows lived there. I did not know then that black men lived all around this seacoast. I looked around and tried to find

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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aboriginal dialect than for several hundred nomads to learn English, I arranged with two youths to teach me. But until I constantly practised the local dialect on them I found that they were learning English much faster than I was learning their tongue. In their anxiety to learn English, they said that it would be quicker for me to teach them than for me to bother to learn aboriginal; moreover, I would eventually go back to my own people, and they would then have to start all over again and teach my successor.

If good English is spoken to the aboriginal he learns it with an ability and speed that makes the use of pidgin English absurd. No one knows where pidgin English originated, but the term 'pidgin' is thought to be a Chinese corruption of the word 'business'. Through the years there has been a local fungus-development of an Australian pidgin-jargon, in which occur such travesties of speech as 'blackfellow', 'gin', 'lubra', 'thinkin', 'savvy', 'sitdown', 'alonga', and 'gammon'; and these in turn have been reinforced by still more hybrid phrases and transplanted by traders throughout the South Pacific.

At Goulburn Island where a school had been established for twenty years, a Government doctor was making an inspection and singled out an old woman for further attention. Turning to her son, the doctor loosed a flood of pidgin which I failed to follow, but I gathered that he wanted to know how long her fingers had been doubled up. The heavy silence was broken by the boy saying, in perfectly modulated English: 'I beg your pardon, doctor?' Fortunately the medico had a sense of humour and his laughter cleared the way for a successful inquiry in English. Recently a naval patrol vessel anchored off Goulburn Island, and an officer questioned a youth in pidgin. The boy said in surprise: 'Excuse me, sir, are you a "new Australian"?'

In writing the dialect, I found that several English consonants were not needed and the ordinary alphabet had to be

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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vicinity of the speaker and 'limeru' includes everybody, far and wide, such as the human race.

Stone Age men have little use for numbers, for they have so little to count. If a definite number is used at all, it is usually under five. Fingers are the theoretical basis for counting, and one is 'wonggain'; two 'marrama'; three is two plus one; four is two and two; five is known as a hand, 'korng'. Six is hand plus one, and so on to ten, which is two hands, 'korng-marrama'. When pidgin is in use, the numerals are one to five, and after that it is 'big mob'.

Aboriginal languages are 'alive' and are being altered to meet new needs and conditions. Many new words have been absorbed as a result of the Macassars trading here, and so complete has been the acceptance and use of these terms, that the oldest nomads, some of whom travelled to Macassar on the trading proas, do not readily recognize their origin. With the advent of white traders, the Yulengor began to assimilate English words, and at Yirrkala I found a boy called Deamer (steamer) and a girl Giggerat (cigarette). Soap is 'jope', scissors are 'thither', razor is 'yeezer', cockroach 'karkrartj', and from one end of the country to the other, flying fox has been corrupted to 'bailanbok'. A nomad can do no other than reckon the hours of the day by the sun, and as a consequence, clocks and watches are also known as sun, 'wolu'.

'Dimit-dimirr' is the word for barbed fronds on the pandanus palm, as well as for thorny trees and spiky anemones, but now it is given to introduced lemon trees and barbed wire. 'To swim' is 'waitun' and to this they add the suffix 'mirry', something like our suffix 'ful', meaning 'full of', and the resultant 'waitunamirry' becomes a boat's propellor. 'Kurrta', denoting fire, firewood, or smoke, now serves for an engine, and 'kurrtamirry', full of fire, is a shotgun or rifle. Any law is 'rorm', and the verb 'to give' is 'gurrpan', so that to teach something is 'rormgurrpan',